MEETING MINUTES
Mayor’s Youth Task Force
Thursday, November 17, 2011
2:00 PM
Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, 2100 Ridge Ave, Room 2403

Elected Officials Present: Elizabeth Tisdahl, Mayor; Delores A. Holmes, Fifth Ward Alderman.

Members Present: Vernon Clark (ETHS); Monique Parsons (McGaw YMCA); Sam Pettineo (ETHS); Matthew Zampa; Neal H. Levin; Naria Santa Lucia (Moran Center); Brittney Walker; Bennet Silbert; Richard Mosley, Jr (Pastor); Wendy Weaver (S.O.S.); Seth Green (Y.O.U.); Joey Rodgers (Peaceable Cities).

Staff Present: Doug Gaynor, Parks, Recreation, and Community Services (PRCS) Director; Evonda Thomas, Health Director; Aretha Hartley, Evanston Police Department; Richard Eddington, Evanston Police Department Chief; Jonathan Webb, Health; Shanee Weston, City Manager’s Office; Joseph McRae, City Manager’s Office.

Discussion
PRCS Director Doug Gaynor reported on results of the Mayor’s Safe Summer Program, 540 youth attended. Target age-group was 16-25 for job and educational issues. Mayor is working to have Oakton Community College to Evanston Township High School to offer vocational training. Mayor hopes to reconvene in January to discuss new activities to engage youth for the summer of 2012. Ald. Holmes stated that prayer vigils were also integral to the Safe Summer program and various pastors from the community would like to incorporate them as regular parts of the Safe Summer program. Chief Eddington reported anonymous tips by texting remains viable – ETHS has text-tip services as well. There are mentoring services available through Youth Organizations Umbrella as well the Police Department. Mayor wants to send message to youth that Evanston is not just a city that tells the youth what they cannot do, but will also provide activities.

Question was asked whether the task force would have an actual youth representative group. The Mayor stated there was a youth representative, Josh Easington, but he was not available during school days unless the time was changed. Options proposed were to change the meeting time of the task force, to meet occasionally with the youth at ETHS, or have the youth attend a task force meeting with parental consent. Members inquired whether there was any Latino representation in the task force. Staff reported invitations were sent, and they will continue to find Latino representation. Question was asked whether there were activities for youth below age 16. PRCS Department Director Gaynor explained that the City offers comprehensive programs in the summer for youth, the Safe Summer program was an enhanced set of services for the 16 to 25 demographic. It was identified that there was a lack of services geared towards the 18-25 demographic. Mayor restated the importance of bringing classes from Oakton Community College to ETHS, as well as exploring collaborations with Truman College to eliminate transportation difficulties.
The issue of prohibiting sports participation among problem students was raised, many youth remain engaged with education through involvement with sports. ETHS Assistant Principal Vernon Clark stated problem students are not prohibited from participating in sports, but are prohibited from spectating. If students continue to be a problem then further actions may be taken. Concerns were voiced that students previously expelled from ETHS will be unable to return to the school for evening vocational courses. ETHS Assistant Principal Clark said that certain students need to be rehabilitated socially and emotionally, expanding the scope of the task force. Ald. Holmes stated the purpose of the task force was to assemble all non-profit organizations to coordinate services for all the needs of the youth. Members indicated it is important to partner with employers. Member shared that Lift was building a directory of community resources open to the public.

Members suggested the formation of a shared community vision would be helpful to organize a strategy around which organizations could coalesce. Naria Santa Lucia, Vernon Clark, Monique Parsons, Joey Rodgers and Seth Green volunteered to serve on the Subcommittee on Shared Vision and Strategy. Next meeting will be January 19th, 2012 at 2:00 pm.